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ABSTRACT

A national survey of 175 public relations managers documented fund-raising encroachment (subordination of public relations functions to fund-raising) at 23% of their charitable organizations, with variation in vulnerability among different types (e.g., the public relations function is managed by fund raising at 50% of the private colleges and universities (N=38) represented in the study, whereas only 14% of the human services organizations (N=50) reported similar encroachment). Small, but significant, correlations were found between encroachment and the extent to which the public relations department has the knowledge and expertise to practice two-way symmetric and asymmetric models of public relations and the communication manager role. Together, knowledge of the four public relations models and two roles accounted for 19% of the explained variance in observed encroachment. Factor analysis yielded scales of high and low potential of the public relations department that may be useful in future encroachment research, whether the encroachment is by fund raising or marketing. (Six tables of data are included; 28 references are attached.) (Author/RS)

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# POTENTIAL OF THE PUBLIC RELATIONS DEPARTMENT AS A DETERRENT TO FUND-RAISING ENCROACHMENT

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## ABSTRACT

### Potential of the Public Relations Department as a Deterrent to Fund-Raising Encroachment

Public Relations Division, Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication National Convention, Montreal, Canada, August 5-8, 1992,.

A national survey of 175 public relations managers documented fund-raising encroachment at 23 percent of their charitable organizations, with variation in vulnerability among different types (e.g., the public relations function is managed by fund raising at 50 percent of the private colleges and universities [N=38] represented in the study, whereas only 14 percent of the human services organizations [N=50] reported similar encroachment). Small, but significant correlations were found between encroachment and the extent to which the public relations department has the knowledge and expertise to practice the two-way symmetric and asymmetric models of public relations and the communication manager role. Together, knowledge of the four PR models and two roles accounted for 19 percent of the explained variance in observed encroachment. Factor analysis yielded scales of high and low potential of the public relations department that may be useful in future encroachment research, whether the encroachment is by fund raising or marketing.

# POTENTIAL OF THE PUBLIC RELATIONS DEPARTMENT AS A DETERRENT TO FUND-RAISING ENCROACHMENT

This study represents the third stage in a program of research on fund-raising encroachment on the function of public relations in charitable organizations. In this study, 175 public relations practitioners participated in a national survey that examined the relationship between the organizational functions of public relations and fund raising. The *potential* of the public relations department, as measured by the extent to which the department has the knowledge and expertise needed to practice two-way models of public relations and the communication manager role, was theorized to be a critical variable in predicting fund-raising encroachment and in providing reasons for its occurrence.

The purpose of this study is to build theory. An earlier exploratory study on the relationship between fund raising and public relations in those charitable organizations with missions of education or arts, humanities and culture, had documented the subordination of public relations in an alarming proportion of those organizations (Kelly, 1992a). In another study, depth interviews with 19 public relations managers in Maryland and Louisiana examined factors leading to encroachment, as well as the consequences of fund-raising encroachment (Kelly, 1992b). These qualitative studies suggested theoretical concepts that help explain fund-raising encroachment and add to parallel work on marketing encroachment in the for-profit sector. Their findings provided tentative answers to the problem—answers that, in the form of hypotheses, have now been tested in this stage of the program, using more rigorous, large-sample quantitative research.

## REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

### Previous Studies

Dozier and Lauzen (1990) defined encroachment as "the assignment of professionals from outside public relations to manage the public relations function" (p. 3). In recent years,

these scholars from San Diego State University have undertaken a program of research on encroachment on public relations by the marketing function (Lauzen, 1990; 1991a, 1991b; Dozier and Lauzen, 1990). Although these studies have contributed greatly to our understanding of factors related to encroachment, they have limited themselves to the phenomenon of marketing encroachment, particularly as it occurs in the for-profit sector.

Lauzen (1990) theorized that marketing encroachment is the result of an organizationally weak public relations department and an aggressive marketing department, particularly during unstable times. In her study of 16 public relations managers in California, she identified five internal and external reasons for encroachment. One of her two internal reasons, or factors, was lack of manager competencies. The theoretical foundation of Lauzen's study, which also is a basis for this study, was public relations role theory, as developed by Broom and Dozier (e.g., 1986). Using the parsimonious explanation of manager and technician, Lauzen defined manager competencies as "the *behavioral skills* necessary to engage in the activities that constitute the public relations manager role" (p. 4). She said such skills are acquired through formal education and experience and included these variables along with strategic planning and issues management as indicators of the manager role.

Utilizing strategic contingencies theory, Lauzen (1991b) suggested that public relations practitioners enacting the manager role are powerful, whereas those practitioners enacting the technician role are powerless. Departmental power, she said, is rooted in the manager's ability "to reduce uncertainty, to provide a nonsubstitutable function through the control of scarce and valued resources, and to increase centrality through participation in management decision making" (p. 246). "Theoretically," she continued, "when the most senior public relations practitioner in an organization fails to enact the manager role, a 'power vacuum' is created and the department is left without management" (p. 246). At this point, individuals from other, more powerful departments are able to take over and encroachment occurs.

Following Lauzen (1990), Kelly (1992b) conducted two sets of depth interviews with public relations managers in 11 charitable organizations in Maryland and in 8 charitable organizations in Louisiana. She found that the public relations function was subordinate to the fund-raising function in 7 (37%) of the organizations in her study (i.e., fund-raising encroachment had occurred). The public relations department did not manage fund raising in any of the 19 organizations, which contradicts Kelly (1991), who defined fund raising as a specialization of public relations, and the Body of Knowledge Task Force of the PRSA Research Committee (1988), which clearly intended that fund raising should be defined as a component of public relations when it incorporated the subheading, "Fund-Raising," as the seventh element and function of the professional practice of public relations.

Of the 19 public relations managers in Kelly's (1992b) study, 12 (63%) reported a structurally separate relationship between the public relations and fund-raising functions in their organizations; however, of the 12, only 2 (11%) provided evidence that such a structure had protected the autonomy of the public relations department and is stable. In 3 of the 12 organizations, public relations was incorporated within a department headed by a manager with a background other than public relations or fund raising, such as marketing (i.e., encroachment had occurred, although not from fund raising). Of the remaining nine, analyses of their responses to indicators measuring organizational power and access to the dominant coalition—including participation in policy decisions and strategic planning—as well as differences between public relations and fund raising in staff sizes, salaries, and titles of the most senior officer, revealed widespread inequities that diminish the contribution of public relations to organizational effectiveness and that may be antecedents to actual encroachment.

A major premise of this study is that the survival and success of charitable organizations depends on managing environmental interdependencies with multiple publics, not just donors. Subordination of the public relations function through fund-raising encroachment

focuses undue attention on donors at the expensive of other strategically important publics, leaving the organization vulnerable to loss of support and even attack by those who have been ignored (e.g., legislators, employees, or clients).

As Haberman and Dolphin (1988) explained, "The clinic that concentrates on cultivating major donors but lets relations languish with another external public, its patients, will find occupancy in its impressive new facilities well below capacity, perhaps suggesting second thoughts to some donors" (p. 139).

Focusing on the multiple publics of higher educational institutions, 30-year veteran practitioner Michael Radock (1983) wrote: "Not only are these audiences numerous, they are prone to 'participate' in the operation of the institution. Thus the college public relations person must be deft in balancing a broad spectrum of interests, alert to rapidly changing concerns among various publics, and imaginative and agile in meeting the demands of these special publics" (p. 324).

Providing a macro perspective of the function, Cutlip, Center and Broom (1985) stated, "Public relations . . . helps organizations anticipate and react to significant publics' perceptions and opinions, new values and life styles in the marketplace, power shifts among the electorate and within legislative bodies, and other changes in the social, economic, technological, and political environment. Without the public relations function, organizations would become dysfunctional due to their insensitivity to change" (p. 19).

In short, fund-raising encroachment forces public relations practitioners to concentrate on the concerns and demands of only one public, effectively placing *environmental blinders* on the function and the organizations they strive to serve. Based on systems theory, such an imbalance eventually will result in dysfunctional organizations susceptible to crises involving strategic publics other than donors.

## Public Relations Potential and Fund-Raising Encroachment

The central proposition of the book, *Excellence in public relations and communication management: Contributions to effective organizations*, edited by J. Grunig (1992), is that public relations increases the effectiveness of organizations by managing the interdependence of the organization with publics that restrict its autonomy. According to J. Grunig and L. Grunig (1992), "Organizations manage interdependence by building long-term, stable relationships with those publics" (p. 313).

In an earlier work, Grunig and Grunig (1991) stated, "Public relations—managed communication—makes organizations more effective by building relationships with publics that can constrain or enhance the mission of the organization. It also follows logically, however, that public relations departments must have certain attributes to be able to contribute to organizational effectiveness" (p. 260). The attributes these researchers identified in their normative theory of public relations excellence are the strategic practice of public relations and use of the two-way symmetric model, which their research suggests is the most effective model. Addressing the former attribute, Grunig and Grunig found through their literature review that public relations cannot be practiced strategically unless the public relations department is separate from other departments, such as marketing, and is located in the organizational structure so that the department has ready access to the most senior managers. In addition, they stated, "Public relations departments have greater potential to practice strategic management and to use a two-way model of public relations if they include communication managers who conceptualize and direct public relations programs as well as communication technicians who provide technical services such as writing, editing, photography, media contacts, or production of publications" (pp. 271-272).

Finally, J. Grunig and L. Grunig (1989) found that only when public relations practitioners are members of an organization's dominant coalition can they influence which publics in the environment are the most important for their organization's success and survival (i.e., the publics for which strategic public relations programs are planned). "At that point," according to Grunig and Grunig, "public relations practitioners can fulfill a communication counseling and management role—and truly practice the profession defined for them in public relations textbooks but seldom fulfilled in the real world" (p. 60).

In other words, fund-raising encroachment—by definition—places *environmental blinders* on charitable organizations and confines public relations to a nonprofessional practice. If fund-raising encroachment occurs, public relations practitioners will not be members of their organizations' dominant coalitions and strategic public relations programs for important publics other than donors likely will not be planned; thereby leaving those organizations vulnerable to unmet demands by ignored publics, such as legislators, employees, and clients. As Grunig and Grunig (1991) explained, conflict results and issues occur when "the interdependence between the organization and its internal or external publics is not well managed" (p. 264).

Furthermore, practitioners will not fulfill the counseling and management role defined by the practice of public relations as a profession, but rather will provide technical support as members of a lower-level occupation.

According to J. Grunig and L. Grunig (1989), "Public relations practitioners with the knowledge, training, and experience to practice a two-way model of public relations are more likely to be included in the organization's dominant coalition" (p. 60). Therefore, it would follow that knowledge and expertise to practice J. Grunig's (e.g., 1984) two-way asymmetric or two-way symmetric models of public relations would be associated with fund-raising encroachment in the charitable organizations represented in this study and help explain why encroachment occurs.

The following hypothesis was suggested:

- **H1 - If a public relations department has the knowledge and expertise needed to practice a two-way model of public relations, then fund-raising encroachment will be less likely to occur.**

The development and testing of this hypothesis are rooted in the current work of J. Grunig (1992) and his colleagues on the Excellence in Public Relations research project, sponsored by the International Association of Business Communicators (IABC) Foundation. In their study, which tested a causal model describing the interrelationships among variables contributing to excellent public relations management, the IABC researchers measured the *knowledge* of public relations departments as a critical variable identified through their review of the literature. As explained by J. Grunig (1989) in his key to the IABC questionnaires, this question measured "the potential of the public relations department." He stated, "These items have been developed to determine the extent to which the public relations department has the knowledge needed to practice each of the four models of public relations and each of the four roles" (p. 3).

Based on J. Grunig (1989, 1992) and the IABC research team's work, a second hypothesis was suggested:

- **H2 - If the public relations department has the knowledge and expertise needed to practice the communication manager role, then fund-raising encroachment will be less likely to occur.**

Finally, the American Association of Fund-Raising Counsel (AAFRC) Trust for Philanthropy (1991) segments charitable organizations into six major categories: (a) religion, (b) human services, (c) education, (d) health, (e) arts, culture and humanities, and (f) public/society benefit. Previous research on educational organizations by Kelly (1992a) had suggested differences in the relationship between public relations and fund raising among different educational types. For example, Kelly (1992a) found evidence that fund-raising encroachment was less prevalent in public universities than it was in private universities. It

was theorized that critical differences existed among the various types of charitable organizations and particularly among the subcategories of education. Based on earlier findings, the following research question was included for testing in this empirical study:

- **R1 - How do types of charitable organizations differ in fund-raising encroachment on the public relations function?**

## METHODOLOGY

### Sample

The population of interest was public relations practitioners who work for nonprofit organizations that are likely to have a fund-raising function, primarily those tax-exempt organizations categorized by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) as 501(c)(3) to which donor contributions are tax deductible. For the purposes of this study, reasonable sources for a population defined for actual study were the Educational and Cultural Organizations Section (ECOS) and the Social Services Section (SSS) of the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA). It was assumed that these two professional interest sections consist primarily of public relations practitioners who work for charitable organizations with missions in education, in arts, culture, and the humanities, or in human services—three of the six categories of gift-recipient organizations provided by the AAFRC Trust (1989).

It must be pointed out that members of the population of interest are spread throughout the membership of PRSA and its 14 different professional interest sections. However, there is no realistic means to separate those practitioners from the general PRSA membership, which totals approximately 15,000 members. Likewise, it is not feasible to distinguish between for-profit and nonprofit organizational representatives in the Health Academy (e.g., 50 percent of all American hospitals are nonprofits, but charitable status is not part of PRSA's data base). Nor is it feasible to distinguish between those practitioners in the Association Section who work for associations that have been granted 501(c)(3) designation by the IRS and those who

work for mutual benefit societies, which are unlikely to have a fund-raising function because gifts to them are not tax-deductible.

As discussed by Kelly (1991), the nonprofit sector—as opposed to the two other economic sectors of American society, for-profit (business) and government—is not easily defined. According to Simon (1987), "The sprawling and unruly collection of animals that populate the nonprofit world—from churches to civil rights groups to garden clubs to the National Council on Philanthropy (NCOP)—makes this field hard to grasp and study all at once" (p. 69). In short, it is often easier to define those organizations to which gifts are deductible by what they are not, rather than by what they are (i.e., charitable organizations are not businesses or government, although an increasing number of local, state, and federal government agencies recently have established charitable entities through which to raise private gifts).

By definition, then, the ten professional sections of PRSA remaining from the four already discussed were inappropriate for the population of interest: Corporate, Counselors Academy, Educators, Financial Services, Investor Relations, Professional Services, Public Affairs & Government, Technology, Travel and Tourism, and Utilities.

The population defined for actual study, therefore, was the ECOS and SSS membership of PRSA. The *1991-92 PRSA Register* (PRSA, 1991) listed a total of 471 members for these two sections. Again, because of the requirement of charitable organization affiliation, many of these dues-paying members did not fall within the population parameters. Removed from the membership listings were public relations consultants and counselors, practitioners who worked for identifiable for-profit businesses (e.g., the PR director of Wausau Insurance Companies and the First VP of corporate affairs for Credit Suisse) and for communication service companies (e.g., publishing houses and media production firms), salespersons, educators with titles of academic rank, and individuals with no organizational affiliation.

In all, 121 individuals (26 percent) were deleted from the original 1991 listings, leaving 244 ECOS and 106 SSS members for a total population of 350 public relations practitioners. Of these, 88 were accredited members of PRSA, 16 were associate members, and 246 were non-accredited, full members—roughly the same distribution of membership level reflected among general PRSA members.

This study's deletion of 26 percent of the combined 1991 ECOS and SSS membership emphasizes the need for researchers to carefully examine lists for the "goodness-of-fit" of individual members to the populations as defined. Too often, we rely on aggregate membership lists, such as those generated from PRSA, which may skew the results of our research. In particular, the question of unaffiliated practitioners, many of whom are unemployed or retired, should be addressed for the appropriateness of their participation in studies designed to measure current situations related to the public relations function within organizations (e.g., studies on the skills desired for hiring entry-level practitioners).

A four-page questionnaire was designed for this fund-raising encroachment study and pretested by 11 members of the Maryland Chapter of PRSA who worked for 501(c)(3) charitable organizations. As discussed shortly, their comments resulted in a change of wording for one indicator measuring knowledge of the two-way asymmetric model, as well as other modifications.

In September 1991, the revised questionnaire was mailed with a personalized cover letter and a self-addressed, stamped return envelope to the purged ECOS and SSS population. Of the 350 questionnaires mailed, 6 were returned as undeliverable, deceased, duplicate, or no longer employed. An additional 16 questionnaires were returned because the member's organization, such as the Independent Order of Foresters, was not a 501(c)(3) charity. These returns further reduced the population actually studied to 328. By January 1992, 175 completed questionnaires had been returned for a response rate of 53 percent.

## Measurement

Utilizing a fractionation scale and indices of public relations knowledge that he first developed with Wetherell (1989) for her thesis study, J. Grunig (1989) used four items each in the IABC study to measure the four models of public relations and four items each to measure the four roles of public relations (Dozier, 1983; Broom & Dozier, 1986), for a total of 32 items to measure *knowledge* of the public relations department.

Respondents to the IABC study were asked to choose any number on the fractionation scale that described the extent to which their department or someone in their department had the expertise or knowledge to perform each of the 32 tasks listed. Tasks, such as "take photographs" and "write speeches," for example, were indicators used to measure the communication technician role.

Indicators measuring knowledge or expertise needed to practice the four public relations roles—the two major roles of communication manager and communication technician and the two minor roles of communication liaison and media relations—were first developed for Wetherell's (1989) study, drawing heavily from Dozier (1983). Indicators measuring knowledge needed to practice the four models of public relations—press agentry, public information, two-way asymmetric, and two-way symmetric—also were first developed for Wetherell's (1989) study, drawing heavily from J. Grunig's previous work (e.g., 1984).

As Wetherell (1989) stated, "Managerial roles have been shown in past studies [as well as in her own] to correlate with the more sophisticated two-way models" (p. 166). Calculating Pearson correlation coefficients between knowledge of the public relations models and the practice of and preference for those models, Wetherell found that practitioners who know how to practice all four models, tend to practice the two-way models. For example, she found stronger correlations between knowledge of the public information model and of the press agentry model with practitioners who practiced the two-way symmetrical model (.24 and .32,

respectively) than with those who actually practiced the public information or press agentry models (.17 and .29). Wetherell concluded, "People cannot practice or even prefer what they do not know" (p. 201).

This fund-raising encroachment study adopted the fractionation scale and indices of public relations knowledge from Wetherell (1989) and the IABC research team (J. Grunig, 1989). The initial data report of the IABC study, by J. Grunig, L. Grunig, Dozier, Ehling, Repper, and White (1991), supported using the scale and indices. Furthermore, Wetherell (1989) credited the fractionation scale for reliability statistics for the roles and models indices that were "better than they have been in past studies" (p. 140).

Also based on Wetherell's (1989) findings, some modifications were made in the items used to construct the roles and model indices. Foremost, the original 32 items were reduced to 24 by eliminating separate measurements of the communication liaison and media relations roles. The decision to eliminate eight indicators was supported by three sources: the literature confirming the minor status of the two roles and Wetherell's and the IABC team's (Grunig et al., 1991) decisions to collapse the four roles into two major roles during analysis.

As Broom and Dozier (1986) pointed out, communication liaison and media relations are two minor public relations roles. They are, respectively, variations on the major roles of communication manager and technician. These minor roles were less stable than the manager and technician roles across the different data sets reviewed in J. Grunig and L. Grunig's (1989) program of research. Finally, Dozier (1992) has argued that the most frequent roles of public relations practitioners are manager and technician.

Although Wetherell (1989) and the IABC team (Grunig et al., 1991) measured knowledge to practice all four public relations roles in their respective studies, both collapsed the four roles into two—manager and technician—when analyzing their data. Following Wetherell, the IABC team of researchers and the literature (e.g., Dozier, 1992), the 16

items measuring knowledge and expertise needed to practice public relations roles were collapsed to 8 items measuring knowledge of the two major roles: manager and technician.

Having computed Cronbach's alpha for her two role indices and the "alpha without item" to show the contribution any one indicator makes to the index's alpha, Wetherell (1989) found that one indicator for each of the two major roles did not contribute to that index's reliability (i.e., Cronbach's alpha was the same without the item as it was with it). Therefore, "perform environmental scanning," because of its lack of contribution to the manager index's alpha, was not selected for this study. For the same reason, "take photographs," was modified to read, "take photographs or coordinate photography," as it was theorized that even public relations technicians rarely take their own photographs. Seven additional tasks of the remaining 14 were selected for inclusion in this study, with some consideration given to their contribution to each of the indices' alpha in Wetherell's (1989) study.

Of the 16 original indicators used to measure degree of knowledge or expertise needed to practice each of the four public relations models, 15 were adopted without modification. One, "get publics to behave as your organization wants," was changed to "get publics to adopt behaviors that your organization wants them to adopt," because of respondent feedback during pretesting of the questionnaire.

Simple additive scales were formed from the 24 indicators used to measure the extent to which a public relations department had the knowledge and expertise needed to practice each of the four models of public relations and each of the two roles. Because an open-end scale was used, scores were transformed by determining their square roots to reduce a positive skew, resulting in an approximately normal distribution. To estimate reliability, Cronbach's alpha was computed for the six indices to show the extent to which each of the questions in an index measures the same underlying concepts.

Encroachment on public relations was measured by three separate indicators: self-reported structural relationship between public relations and fund raising, and agreement or disagreement with the statements, "Top management hires and promotes fund raisers to manage the PR department," and "Fund raising increasingly is taking over the management of public relations." The former indicator was adopted from Lauzen (1990), who measured observed marketing encroachment by a scale consisting of three items: Top management (1) promotes, (2) hires, and (3) moves individuals from some other profession or department other than public relations, such as marketing or strategic planning, to manage the public relations department. Lauzen's scale explained 84 percent of the variance and had a Cronbach's alpha of .91. Her three items were collapsed into one indicator for this study.

Types of charitable organization were measured by single indicators. To help answer the research question about differences among the types, educational organizations were broken down by two dimensions: public or private governance and mission level (i.e., schools, two- and four-year colleges, comprehensive and doctoral universities, and research universities).

## FINDINGS

The quantitative data collected was analyzed using SPSS[x], which was run on the University of Southwestern Louisiana's IBM 3090 mainframe computer.

Of the 175 usable questionnaires, the majority (54 percent) came from public relations practitioners who worked for educational organizations. Human services organizations were represented by 29 percent of the respondents, followed by 8 percent for arts, culture and humanities. Given the population defined, it was surprising that health and religious organizations were represented by two and three respondents, respectively. There were no practitioners who categorized themselves as working for the sixth major type of charitable organization, public/society benefit, and 12 respondents categorized themselves as working for

"other type" of charitable organizations with missions, or purposes, not covered by the six major types and six educational subcategories given.

Table 1 gives a breakdown of the 11 types and subcategories of charitable organizations represented in this study by the percentage of each type reporting one of five structural relationships: (1) public relations manages the fund-raising function; (2) fund raising manages the public relations function; (3) public relations reports to or is incorporated in a department headed by a manager from a profession other than public relations or fund raising, such as marketing; (4) public relations is separate from the fund-raising department, with the senior manager of each department reporting directly to the chief executive officer (CEO); or (5) some other structural relationship.

Table 1
**Percentage of 11 Charitable Organization Types by Structural Encroachment on Public Relations**

*Which one of the following best describes the structural relationship between the public relations and the fund-raising, or development, function in your organization?*

| Organizational Type | N | PR Manages Fund Raising | Fund Raising Manages PR | Other Dept. Manages PR | Separate; Report/CEO | Other Structure |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Arts, Culture & Humanities | 12 | - | 25% | 17% | 58% | - |
| Education - Public | | | | | | |
| School Systems | 6 | 17% | 17% | 33% | 17% | 17% |
| 2-/4-YR Colleges | 21 | 19% | 19% | 14% | 48% | - |
| Comp/Doc Universities | 13 | 15% | 8% | 8% | 62% | 8% |
| Research Universities | 13 | - | 15% | 38% | 38% | 8% |
| Education - Private | | | | | | |
| Schools | 4 | - | 100% | - | - | - |
| Colleges & Universities | 38 | 8% | 50% | 8% | 32% | 3% |
| Health | 2 | 50% | - | 50% | - | - |
| Human Services | 50 | 14% | 14% | 6% | 54% | 12% |
| Religion | 3 | 33% | - | - | 67% | - |
| Other Type | 12 | 25% | - | 17% | 25% | 33% |
| | 174 | | | | | |

Overall, fund-raising encroachment is a structural reality in 23 percent of the organizations represented in this study. In another 13 percent, public relations is managed

by a department other than fund raising, such as marketing; therefore, encroachment on the public relations function has occurred in more than one-third of these charitable organizations, as measured by the indicator on structural relationships. In 43 percent of the organizations, the public relations department is separate from the fund-raising department, with the senior manager of each department reporting directly to the CEO. Only 13 percent of the respondents said that, in their organizations, the fund-raising function is managed by the public relations department or an umbrella department, such as *institutional advancement*, which is headed by a public relations manager.

Broken down by types of charitable organizations, there appears to be meaningful variation in the proportion of fund-raising encroachment by the missions and—for education—by the governance of the organizations. As shown in Table 1, 25 percent of arts, culture and humanities organizations have a public relations function managed by fund raising, whereas only 14 percent of human services organizations have the same relationship between the two functions. Of the major AAFRC types represented by more than three respondents, education has both the highest and lowest proportions of encroachment, with 50 percent of all private colleges and universities and only 8 percent of public comprehensive and doctorate-granting universities experiencing fund-raising encroachment on the public relations function. Although they are represented by only four respondents, 100 percent of private schools reported structural fund-raising encroachment.

Approximately the same distribution was found when organizational types were broken down by the two other indicators measuring encroachment on public relations. It should be pointed out here that 75 percent of the respondents were the most senior public relations person in their organization, which lends credibility to these findings.

Overall, 25 percent of the respondents agreed with the statement that fund raising increasingly is taking over the management of public relations (i.e., fund-raising encroachment has or is occurring). The highest proportion of practitioners agreeing with this statement (42 percent) work for arts, culture and humanities organizations. Of those who work for human services organizations, 30 percent agreed. Supporting the pattern identified earlier, 37 percent of the public relations managers at private colleges and universities agreed that fund raising is taking over their function, whereas only 8 percent of the public comprehensive and doctorate-granting universities agreed. This pattern indicates that private schools, colleges, and universities experience encroachment at a higher rate because of their perceived dependence on private as opposed to public funding. Of course, as an increasing number of states reduce public funding to education during these recessionary times, perceived dependence on fund raising could increase in so-called public institutions and change encroachment rates significantly in the future.

Given that private educational institutions traditionally raise significantly more private dollars than public institutions, and that public research universities, as defined by the Carnegie Commission, traditionally raise more private dollars than public comprehensive and doctorate-granting comprehensive universities, which in turn raise more than two- and four-year colleges, and that public school systems have only recently begun to solicit private gifts, it was expected that perceived degree of dependency on private gifts would vary by the subcategories of education and would be reflected in a parallel pattern of fund-raising encroachment on the public relations function. Table 2 shows that traditional giving patterns to the subcategories of education appear to be related to the percentage of organizations reporting fund-raising encroachment (i.e., as governance changes from public to private and as mission for public institutions increases from primary-secondary to research, the proportion of fund-raising encroachment increases).

As is recalled, the third indicator measuring fund-raising encroachment asked respondents the extent to which they agreed or disagreed that, in their organizations, top management hires and promotes fund raisers to manage public relations. Table 2 gives the results of that encroachment measure by the different types of charitable organizations and the subcategories of education.

Table 2
**Percentage of 11 Charitable Organization Types by Agreement/Disagreement with Top Managers Hire and Promote Fund Raisers to Manage Public Relations**

*Please circle the response that most closely describes your opinion on the following statement as it relates to your organization: Top management hires and promotes fund raisers to manage the PR department.*

| Organizational Type | N | Somewhat or Strongly Agreed | Neutral | Somewhat or Strongly Disagreed |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Arts, Culture & Humanities | 12 | 17% | - | 83% |
| Education - Public | | | | |
| School Systems | 6 | - | - | 100% |
| 2-/4-YR Colleges | 20 | 5% | 10% | 85% |
| Comp/Doc Universities | 13 | 8% | - | 92% |
| Research Universities | 13 | 16% | 8% | 77% |
| Education - Private | | | | |
| Schools | 4 | 75% | - | 25% |
| Colleges & Universities | 38 | 24% | 11% | 66% |
| Health | 2 | - | - | 100% |
| Human Services | 50 | 16% | 12% | 72% |
| Religion | 3 | - | - | 100% |
| Other Type | 12 | 8% | 8% | 83% |
| | 173 | | | |

Descending from the top of the educational subcategories, none of those practitioners who work at public school systems, 5 percent of those at public two- or four-year colleges, 8 percent of those at public comprehensive and doctorate-granting universities, 16 percent of those at public research universities, 24 percent of those at private colleges and universities, and 75 percent of those at private schools agreed with the statement. These breakdowns of encroachment measures by types and subcategories

of charitable organizations provide some confirmation that there are critical differences related to encroachment among these nonprofits.

Cronbach's alpha was calculated as an estimate of the reliability of the four models and two roles. Table 3 shows that all six indices measuring knowledge and expertise needed to practice the models and roles had high reliability, ranging from .75 for the technician role to .85 for the public information model.

Table 3
**Cronbach's Alpha for Indices of Knowledge and Expertise to Practice Four Models and Two Roles of Public Relations**

| Models and Roles | Cronbach's Alpha |
|---|---|
| Two-Way Symmetric Model | .81 |
| Two-Way Asymmetric Model | .83 |
| Press Agentry Model | .79 |
| Public Information Model | .85 |
| Technician Role | .75 |
| Manager Role | .82 |
| Combined Six Models & Roles | .91 |

As also found by Wetherell (1989), the reliability measures for the indices used in this study were higher than they have been in other studies that did not use the fractionation scale. J. Grunig and L. Grunig (1989), for example, reported that Cronbach's alpha for indices of the public relations models in seven separate studies was about .60. Furthermore, the public information model previously had been less reliable than the other three model indices, but in this study it had the highest estimate of reliability, .85. Finally, this study represents the first time, to the author's knowledge, that alphas for the more sophisticated two-way models were above .80, which Carmines and Zeller (1979) said is the reliability floor for scales that are widely used.

Based on the results of this study and those conducted by Wetherell (1989) and the IABC team (Grunig et al., 1991), it appears that reliability has increased in measuring

the public relations models and roles because of the use of the fractionation scale, as well as modifications to the items composing the scales. It is noteworthy that Cronbach's alpha for the two-way asymmetric model in this study was higher than those produced by Wetherell or the IABC researchers, which may be partially attributable to the change in wording for one of the four items measuring the two-way asymmetric model (i.e., "get publics to adopt behaviors that your organization wants them to adopt," rather than "get publics to behave as your organization wants"). Perhaps even more important, this study's reliability estimates for knowledge and expertise needed to practice the two major public relations roles were relatively high, .75 and .82, even though the original 16 items used by Wetherell and the IABC team had been reduced to only 8, and wording for one of the four items measuring knowledge of the technician role was changed from "take photographs," to "take photographs or coordinate photography."

Finally, Cronbach's alpha was calculated for an index that combined the six scales measuring knowledge and expertise needed to practice the public relations models and roles. The reliability estimate for this *super scale*, or dummy variable measuring the public relations department's overall knowledge, was .91.

To test the two hypotheses on the association between the public relations department's level of knowledge and expertise and fund-raising encroachment, correlation coefficients were calculated between the six public relations models and roles and the three indicators measuring encroachment. Crosstabulation of the means of the models and roles indices with the self-reported structural relationship between the public relations and fund-raising function produced consistently small and nonsignificant Kendall Tau C correlation coefficients ($\leq \pm .08$). Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients were calculated between the models and roles and responses to the two Likert-like scales on agreement or disagreement with statements about fund-raising encroachment. The Pearson correlation

coefficients again were consistently small and nonsignificant between the models and roles and responses to top management hiring and promoting fund raisers to manage the PR department (≤ ± .06).

On the other hand, correlation coefficients between the models and roles and responses to fund raising increasingly taking over the management of public relations—although still relatively small—supported the two hypotheses. Table 4 shows that knowledge and expertise of the two-way public relations models and the manager role are positively related with disagreement of the statement (i.e., fund raising is not taking over the management of public relations in those organizations). Together, the six models and roles account for 19 percent of the explained variance in observed encroachment.

Table 4

**Pearson Correlation Coefficients for Public Relations Models and Roles and Agreement/Disagreement with Fund Raising Increasingly Taking Over the Management of Public Relations**

*Please circle the response that most closely describes your opinion on the following statement as it relates to your organization: Fund raising increasingly is taking over the management of public relations.*

| Models and Roles | Correlation Coefficients |
|---|---|
| Two-Way Symmetric Model | .19* |
| Two-Way Asymmetric Model | .15* |
| Press Agentry Model | .05 |
| Public Information Model | .04 |
| Technician Role | .02 |
| Manager Role | .15 |
| Combined Six Models & Roles | .19** |

* ≤ .05 ** ≤ .01

Although the correlation coefficients are small, they do support the hypotheses that if a public relations department has the knowledge and expertise needed to practice a two-way model of public relations and the communication manager role, then fund-raising encroachment is less likely to occur. Because this scale's values increased from agreement to disagreement with the statement, Table 4 shows that knowledge and expertise to practice

the two-way symmetric model of public relations has the highest positive correlation with the absence of fund-raising encroachment, followed by knowledge and expertise to practice the two-way asymmetric model and the manager role. As predicted by theory, knowledge and expertise to practice the press agentry model and the technician role have almost no relationship with the absence of fund-raising encroachment, and knowledge of the public information model has an inverse association (i.e., the knowledge and expertise to practice the public information model is associated slightly with the occurrence of fund-raising encroachment). It must be emphasized here, however, that although Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients indicate the degree to which the dependent variable in the relationship—in this case, fund-raising encroachment—is associated with the independent variable—the knowledge and expertise to practice each of the six public relations models and roles—they are not statistics of causality (i.e., they provide no information about whether knowledge of the models and roles cause encroachment).

As mentioned earlier, fund-raising encroachment had occurred in only 23 percent of the public relations departments represented in this study, as measured by self-reported organizational structure. It was hypothesized that some of the departments not reporting structural encroachment may have characteristics that, theoretically, could be considered antecedents to actual encroachment. Lauzen (1991b), for example, theorized that absence of senior public relations practitioners enacting the manager role reduces departmental power and creates a vacuum that enables a more powerful department to take over and encroach on the public relations function.

To test this concept as it relates to U.S. charitable organizations, Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients were calculated between knowledge of the six models and roles and agreement or disagreement with the statement that the senior fund raiser has more say in policy decisions than the senior public relations officer, which measured the

relative power of the two functions. Table 5 shows that there are small, but positive and significant relationships between the knowledge and expertise needed to practice the two-way models and the manager role and power of the public relations department. On the other hand, knowledge and expertise to practice the press agentry and public information models and the technician role have an inverse relationship with departmental power.

Table 5
**Pearson Correlation Coefficients for Public Relations Models and Roles and Agreement/Disagreement with Fund Raising Having More Say in Policy Decisions Than Public Relations**

*Please circle the response that most closely describes your opinion on the following statement as it relates to your organization: The senior fund raiser has more say in policy decisions than the senior PR officer.*

| Models and Roles | Correlation Coefficients |
|---|---|
| Two-Way Symmetric Model | .22** |
| Two-Way Asymmetric Model | .21* |
| Press Agentry Model | -.03 |
| Public Information Model | -.12 |
| Technician Role | -.03 |
| Manager Role | .14 |
| Combined Six Models & Roles | .22** |

* ≤ .05 ** ≤ .01

Although small, these correlation coefficients lend support to the theory advanced here that the public relations department's *potential*, as measured by the extent to which it has the knowledge and expertise to practice the two-way models and the manager role, acts as a deterrent to fund-raising encroachment. Given the high reliability of the combined six models and roles (.91) and the significance of that index's relationships with the two dependent variables of encroachment (≤ .01), scales measuring the potential of the public relations department were constructed by factor analyzing the 24 items that measured the models and roles.

As given in Table 6, factor analysis using principal factors with iterations, rotated to a varimax solution, yielded a two factor solution explaining 59 percent of the variation.

All but five of the variables included in the analysis loaded clearly on one of the two factors, which were identified as high potential in the public relations department and low potential. Furthermore, all but one of the variables loaded logically.

Table 6
**Public Relations Potential Scales**

*Choose any number above or below the normal score of 100 that describes the extent to which your department or someo in your department has the expertise or knowledge to perform each task listed.*

| Items* | Factor Loadings | |
|---|---|---|
| | High Potential | Low Potential |
| **High Potential** | | |
| Two-Way Symmetric Model | | |
| Determine how publics react to the organization. | **.70** | .33 |
| Negotiate with an activist group. | **.79** | .07 |
| Use theories of conflict resolution in dealing with publics. | **.73** | .20 |
| Help management to understand the opinion of particular publics. | **.67** | .39 |
| Two-Way Asymmetric Model | | |
| Get publics to adopt behaviors that your organization wants them to adopt. | **.78** | .09 |
| Use attitude theory in a campaign. | **.82** | .09 |
| Manipulate publics scientifically. | **.80** | .06 |
| Manager Role | | |
| Conduct evaluation research. | **.64** | .34 |
| **Low Potential** | | |
| Press Agentry Model | | |
| Convince a reporter to publicize your organization. | .20 | **.80** |
| Get your organization's name into the media. | .18 | **.73** |
| Get maximum publicity from a staged event. | .34 | **.67** |
| Public Information Model | | |
| Provide objective information about your organization. | .12 | **.83** |
| Understand the news values of journalists. | -.01 | **.75** |
| Prepare news stories that reporters will use. | .18 | **.87** |
| Perform as journalists inside your organization. | .22 | **.80** |
| Technician Role | | |
| Coordinate a press conference or arrange media coverage of an event. | .28 | **.73** |
| Produce publications. | .19 | **.77** |
| Take photographs or coordinate photography. | .28 | **.65** |
| Manager Role | | |
| Develop strategies for solving public relations problems. | .47 | **.64** |

**Five items with factor loadings ≤ .60 were deleted from the table.*

Explained Variance = 59%

Confirming an underlying theory of this paper, all four items measuring the two-way symmetric model loaded heaviest on the high potential factor, as did three of the four items measuring the two-way asymmetric model and one of the four items measuring the communication manager role. Contrastingly, all four items measuring the public information model loaded heaviest on the low potential factor, as did three of the four items measuring the press agentry model and the technician role. According to Hanushek and Jackson (1977), when factor analysis is used to confirm, rather than to explore theory, it has the advantage of providing construct validity (i.e., if factor analysis results agree with a prior model, such agreement is evidence of appropriate theory building).

As noted, five items with factor loadings ≤ .60 on the potential scales were dropped from Table 6: one each measuring the two-way asymmetric and press agentry models and the technician role, and two measuring the manager role. The fact that the remaining two items measuring the manager role split between the high potential and low potential factors may be related to conceptual differences between the two items, as explained by the IABC research team (Grunig et al., 1991). Finding a high mean of knowledge (12.14) for the item that loaded heaviest on the low potential factor in this study, J. Grunig et al. classified "Develop strategies for solving public relations problems," as a *routine* management function, as opposed to *strategic* management functions, such as conducting evaluation research (p. 4).

Be that as it may, the scales of public relations potential confirm J. Grunig and L. Grunig's (1989) theory, provide evidence of construct validity of that theory, and contribute a powerful tool for future measurements of the factors related to fund-raising encroachment, as well as encroachment by other functions, such as marketing.

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

J. Grunig (1991) called encroachment on the public relations function "a hot topic of the late 1980s and early 1990s" (p. 372). Following J. Grunig (1992), the research program of fund-raising encroachment represented by this study is based on the central premise that autonomy is a fundamental goal of an organization because the successful attainment of all goals is dependent on some degree of autonomy and that the purpose of public relations is to help an organization manage environmental interdependencies in order to protect and enhance the organization's autonomy. As stated by J. Grunig and L. Grunig (1992), "Public relations increases the effectiveness of organizations by managing the interdependence of the organization with publics that restrict its autonomy" (p. 313).

Because most organizations are linked to a diverse range of publics, one function must be responsible for monitoring the organization's status with all. Potentially, every public that is affected by an organization (e.g., employees, community residents, government agencies, media, consumers, stockholders, donors, and activist groups, among others) has the ability and the power to limit an organization's autonomy through loss of revenue, increased costs, regulation, disruption of operations, increased taxation, decreased productivity, opposition to expansion, negative publicity, damaged reputation, and so forth. Each potential means, if enacted, limits an organization's ability to pursue its self-determined goals—whether they are profit-related goals of the corporate sector, public service-related goals of the government sector, or mission-related goals of the nonprofit sector—and limits the organization's means to pursue those goals (i.e., they limit the autonomy of the organization).

Public relations' value to an organization, therefore, is diminished when encroachment takes place—whether that encroachment comes from the marketing function, the fund-raising function, or another organizational function such as human resources. When

managed by an individual from another profession, the primary purpose of public relations is displaced by the functional goals of the manager (e.g., increasing sales or tax-deductible contributions). Other organizational goals and the critical publics related to them are ignored, and the organization becomes vulnerable to crises involving those publics and eventual loss of autonomy.

This study documents the occurrence of fund-raising encroachment in five of the six major types of charitable organizations—a phenomenon that currently is diminishing the status and organizational contribution of public relations in the nonprofit sector. Although only 23 percent of the public relations managers participating in the study reported structural encroachment by fund raising and only 25 percent agreed that fund raising increasingly is taking over the management of public relations, 40 percent indicated that—in their organizations—the senior fund raiser has more say in policy decisions than the senior public relations officer, which theory suggests is an antecedent to fund-raising encroachment.

Correlations between knowledge of the four models and two roles of public relations demonstrated that the expertise needed to practice the two-way models and the manager role is related to the absence of fund-raising encroachment and the power of the public relations department. Finally, the public relations potential scales confirm the validity of using knowledge and expertise of the models and roles as deterrents to fund-raising encroachment.

Future research should utilize the potential scales with other independent variables to help explain fund-raising encroachment. Some of the variables suggested by the literature and this study and others are the genders of the most senior persons in public relations and fund raising, the level of professionalism of the public relations staff, the degree of dependence on private gifts (e.g., the amount of money raised each year), perceptions of

public relations as a primary or support function, and differences in staff salaries and sizes between fund raising and public relations.

Further research is needed to determine what precautions public relations practitioners can take, other than gaining knowledge and expertise of the two-way models and the manager role, against what appears to be a growing trend of fund-raising encroachment. Kelly (1991a) argued that in their own protection and for the benefit of their organizations, public relations practitioners—as well as scholars—must reconsider their world view of fund raising as a separate function and instead approach fund raising as one of public relations' specializations. In other words, encroachment *on* the fund-raising function by public relations may be the only complete defense to fund-raising encroachment.

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